

BRIAN K. VAUGHAN FIONA STAPLES

Saga

CHAPTER
TEN



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HotComic.net

CHAPTER
TEN

Saga

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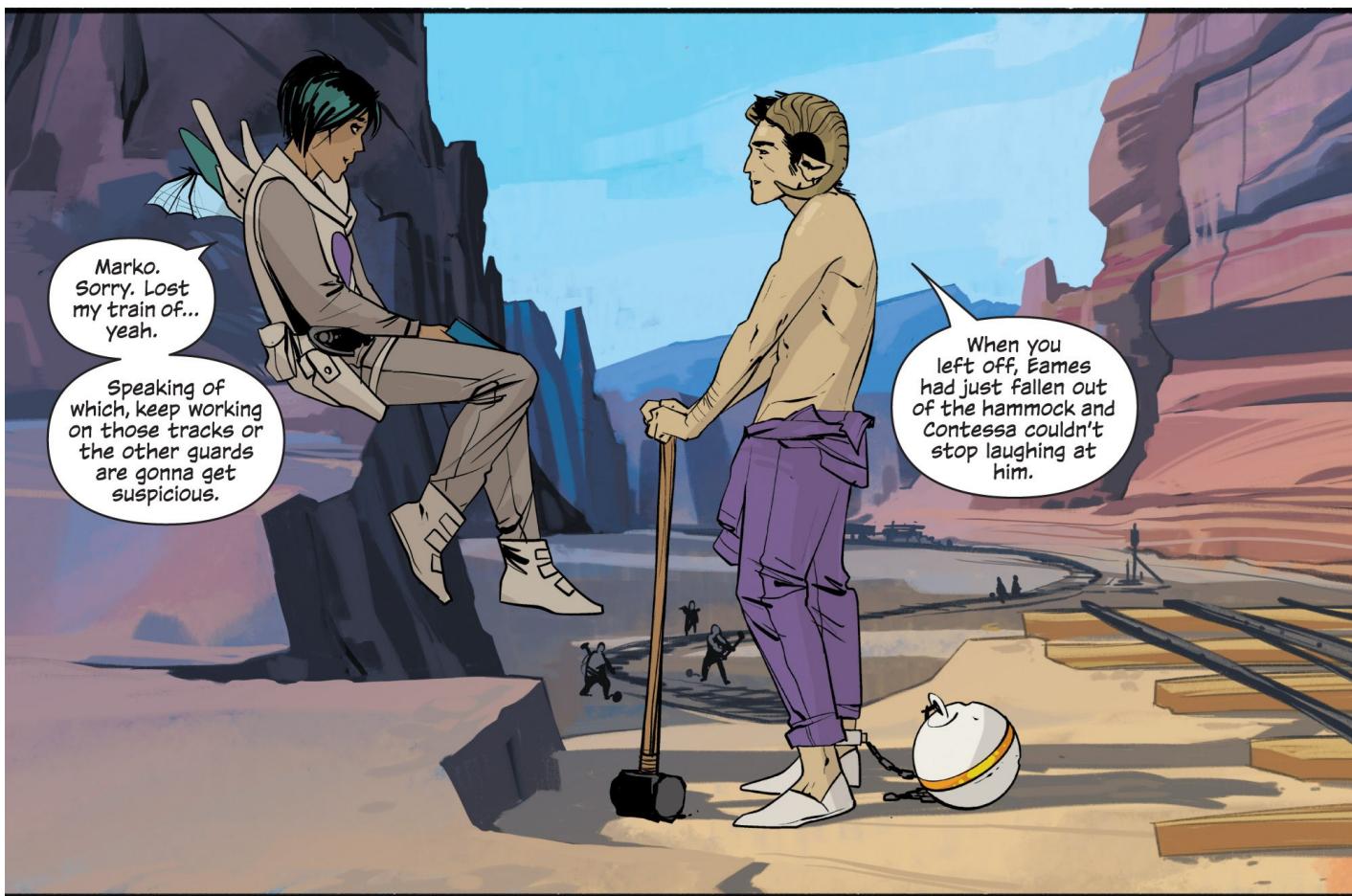
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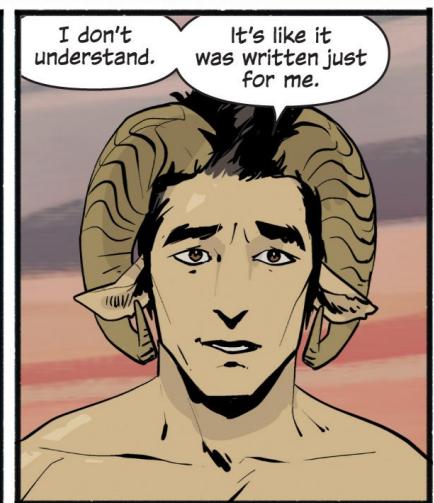
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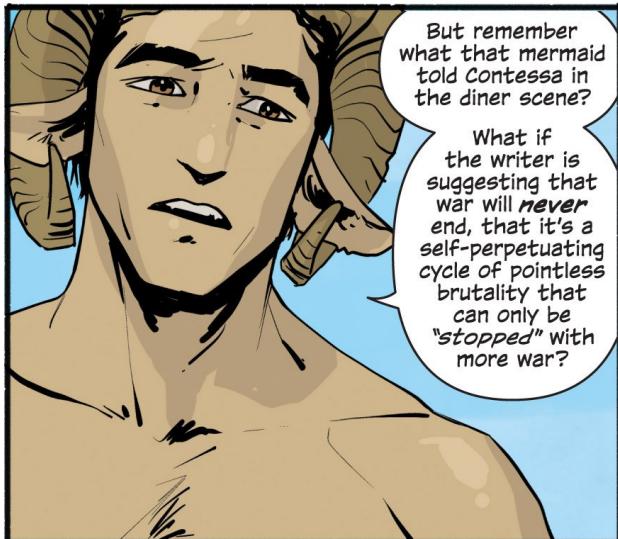
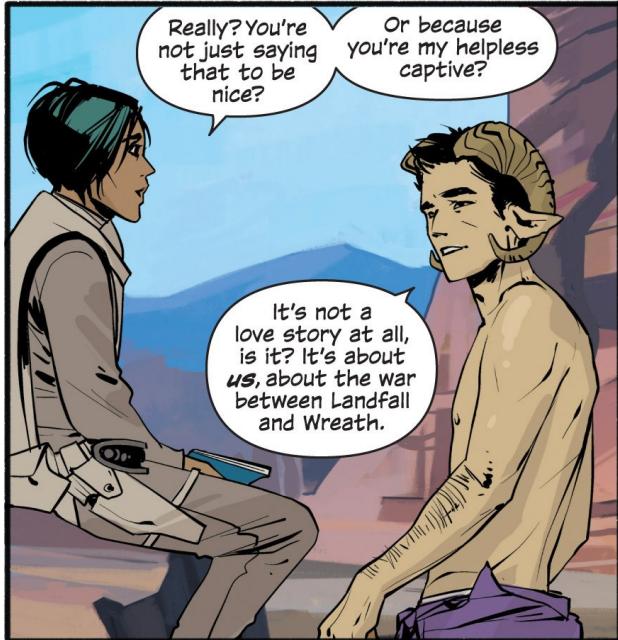
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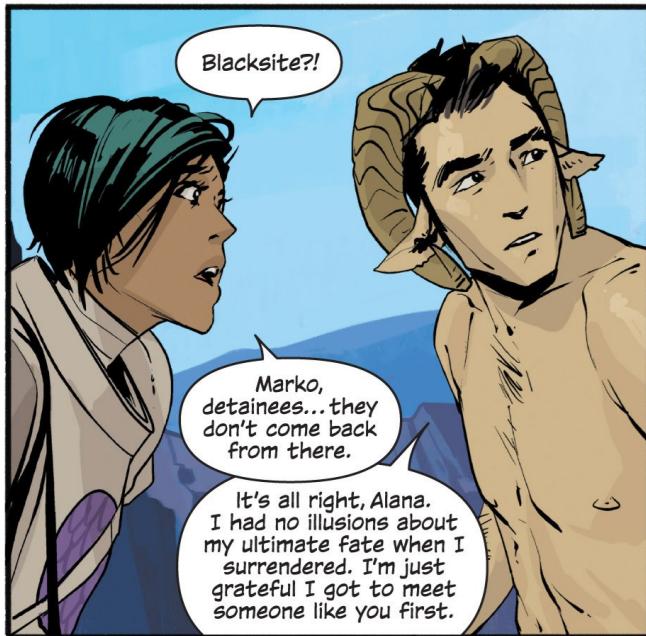




The rock monster blushed, and Contessa worried she'd crossed a line. "It actually looked kind of graceful." "Fuck you," Eames grumbled. He held out his hand for help up, but Contessa hesitated, suspecting that Eames would just pull her to the ground. Instead, she sat down next to him, smoothing the creases of her skirt. The grass was cold. "We should just order in tonight," one of them thought and another said aloud. They looked up at the clouds, their silence broken only by muffled horn blasts from a distant traffic jam.











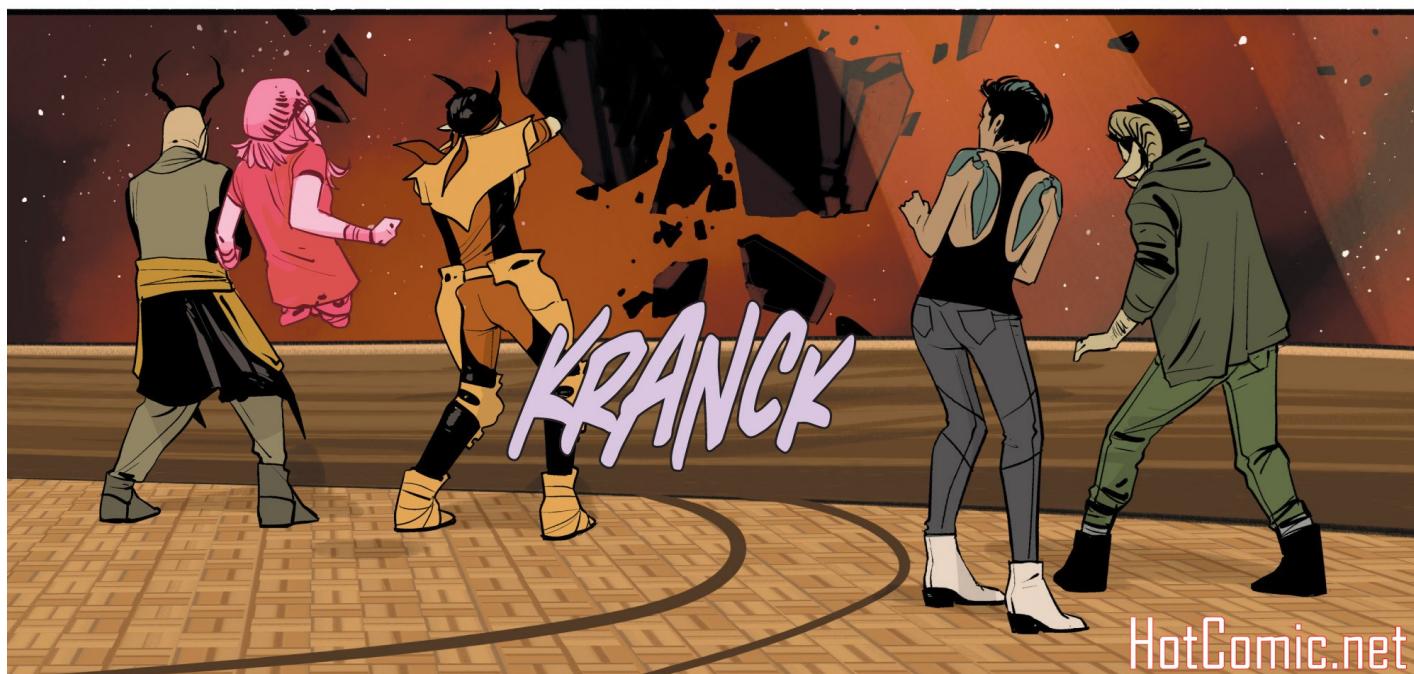








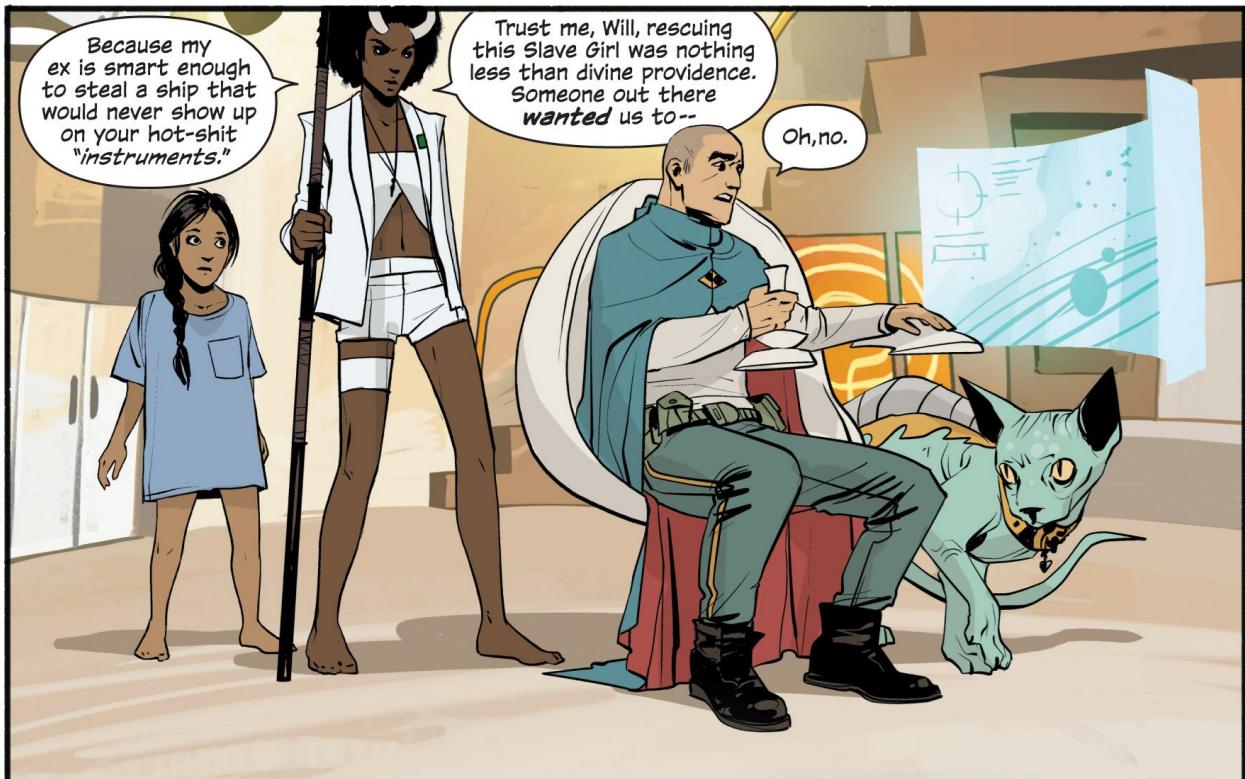






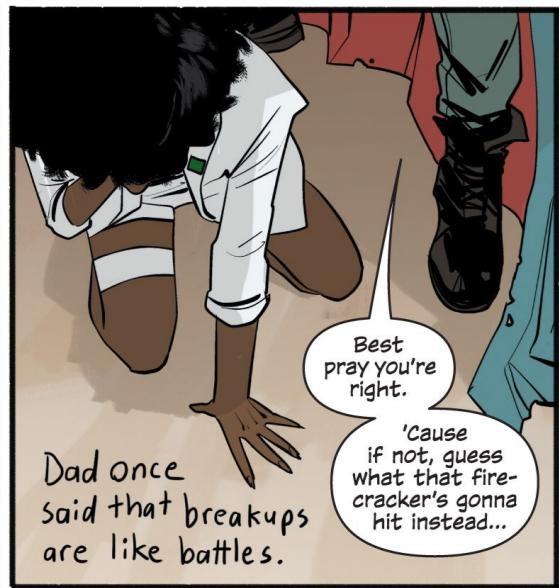


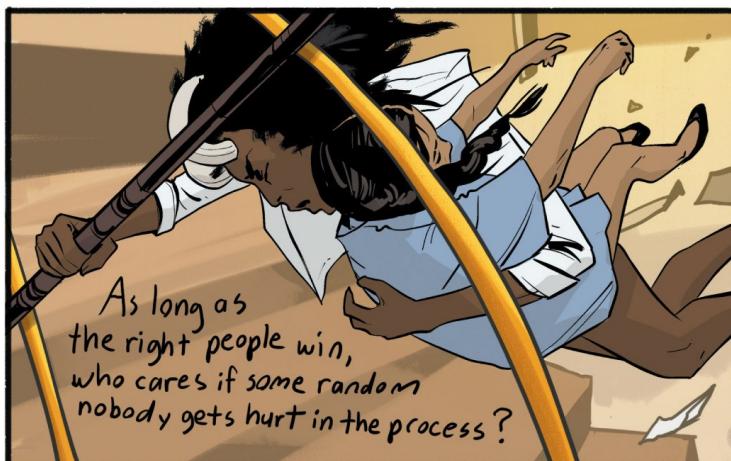














TO BE CONTINUED

4335 VAN NUYS BOULEVARD • SUITE 332 • SHERMAN OAKS • CA 91403

And I thought I got a lot of angry texts from Fiona after the last page of Chapter Five...

Hey, Brian here. I was very sorry to hear that legendary "Writer of Stuff" Peter David suffered a stroke back in December, though I'm heartened to hear that he's already back to work, dictating his next scripts. Incredible.

My older brother is probably the world's biggest PAD fan, and our adolescence was largely defined by a shared love of Peter David's twelve-year run on *The Incredible Hulk* (though I still have a soft spot in my heart for his *Spider-Man 2099* issues with Rick Leonardi). And how good has *X-Factor* been for, like, ever?

You should check out *PeterDavid.net* for his intimidatingly large and excellent bibliography, as well as for ways you can help during the recovery process. And I was weirdly excited to learn that Mr. David has a P.O. Box, so instead of wasting a stamp on our book this month, I hope you'll please consider dropping a note to:

Peter David
c/o Second Age, Inc.
P.O. Box 239
Bayport, NY 11705

Get well soon, Peter!

Dear To Be Continued,

Hi! I have been on-again, off-again with comics for about 20 years, and this is my first letter ever to a letter column, so feel special! I've noticed an awesome trend of superbly talented fans doing superbly awesome things in the name of *Saga* (the crochet dolls, the artwork, the costumes, etc.), but I have struggled to figure out how I could show my support in a creative way... y'know, something beyond just saying, "Word up! What a great, awesome, amazing book!" (Which, hey, it most definitely is. And also... word up.) And then you mentioned this whole costume contest thing, and while I knew I lacked the ability to participate, it further pushed me to figure SOMETHing to do.

Anyway... I finally came up with a way to express my *Saga* fan-boy-ish-ness. After much deliberation, I have decided to share with you this terribly lame song I wrote. Hope you enjoy/tolerate it. It seemed pretty silly and wasteful to me to use up an entire CD for just one song, so I added some random stuff on there. Although, as I think about it, maybe it's more silly for a grown man to give a mix CD to another grown man. But I digress.

Alrighty, guess I should wrap this up. It's probably really an overreaching comment to say, after a comic is only eight issues old, that it's one of my favorite series ever. But, for me, that's exactly how it's shaping up. So I will go ahead and trust

you not to screw it up. Thank you for giving me a reason to return to comics after five years away from the hobby. Man. It's good to be back.

Regards,
Michael Southwick
Concord, NH

Fuck yes, people writing music about our comic! That's some Neil Gaiman shit right there. Thanks so much for the killer song and CD, Michael. We're way honored.

What's everybody else listening to these days? Is it The Walkmen's 'We Can't Be Beat' over and over again while sitting alone in a dark room? Okay, good.

Mr. Vaughan,

I just finished reading *Saga* #8, and the more I see of Alana, the more I'm convinced that you know who my girlfriend is. I told her that Alana reminds me of her a couple of times. From her line, "Is this that Gwendolyn bitch?" in issue #5, I just saw it so clearly.

Now in issue #8, where Alana has quite the touching moment with Barr, the way she talks about Marko reminded me of how she thinks about me. Boy, can I annoy her, be a "self-righteous ass," as I write this I'm not sitting still at all, and what kind of person doesn't laugh at their own jokes, right? Yet, she loves me.

We can't all be a prize, so this reminds me of how there's a great woman beside every man. Even in a universe populated by talking lying Cats and giants with enormous, hanging scrotums, I can easily call it home. Thank you.

All the best,
Cristian Casares
New York, NY

Thanks, Christian. We get a surprising amount of "Alana is clearly based on my girlfriend" mail, as well as "Alana is clearly based on Kristen Stewart/Angelina Jolie/Prince(?!)/some equally improbable celebrity," all of which I think is testament to Fiona somehow conjuring a woman who represents whatever one loves most in life.

To me, Alana appears as a large bowl of country gravy.

Dear Brian and Fiona,

Having just read *Saga* #7 and #8 back to back, I am downright excited by the world you've created. The space opera backdrop blended with the zesty pop culture approach to magic hits just the right tone. It's hipster speculative fiction without being pretentious and exclusive. The frantic story beats fluctuating with quiet moments reveal the pitter-patter of precision plotting.

Fiona's art is so lovely and evolved. I am excited to see

the landscape effects and figure work she develops for each page. The cover to #8 was especially delightful. I loved how the logo was mixed into the art, becoming another layer in the scene.

I love where this series is going and can't wait for you to hit #100 and still be chugging along, brimming with just as much volatile creativity as you have right now.

I recently got back into doing comic book art and have started tossing my work back up on my site along with my novel projects. I was inspired, and how could one not be when the subject has ram horns, to draw Marko. I'm a sucker for any chaps sporting such convoluted horns. Anyway, I've included the original doodle if you're inclined to run it in your letters page.

Thanks so much for creating such a spectacular series!

Brian Clopper
Wake Forest, NC
www.brianclopper.com



That's a kickass Marko, Brian.

Brian & Fiona,

I'm writing on the even of our annihilation, or whatever, because you have compelled me to do so. Just finished reading issue #8, and damn if it isn't the best. If you're reading this, it means we've made it, or at the very least Kevin Costner has found a way to deliver this to you. In spite of it all, I'm thankful to have read *Saga*. And not just the beauty of the form itself, but every engaging word of your column that follows. I'm so grateful that you exist. I hope you and your creativity continue to exist, forever, independently, or in tandem.

Thank you, so much,
John Ingalls
Anchorage, AK

Yes yes, Alaskans, enough of your ceaseless adoration and/or *The Postman* references. Let's get to a nice complaint letter, shall we?

Brian,
Awright, you asked for criticism. Here's some. The

letters in "To Be Continued" are printed in italics. This is an improper use of the typeface. Italics are used to emphasize single words or short phrases. They may also be used to highlight a short excerpt.

I know hate mail is more fun than endless compliments... feel free to criticize. Italics make the often lengthy published letters difficult to read.

Other than that "Saga" is far and away the best comic series so far this century.

Regards,
Jack Dumptert
Kenmore, NY

Many thanks for the kind words and thoughtful criticism, Jack. While my style guide says that italics can be used for emphasis OR distinction, I respect that you find it hard to read, so I've asked our letterer Fonografiks to instead print your critique in a different, though equally respectable, font.

And speaking of Fonografiks, he's doing some of the loveliest design work in comics over in our fellow Image series *Nowhere Men*, which features brain-exploding visuals from Nate Bellegarde and a fantastically sophisticated sci-fi story from... shit, I can't remember the dude's name, but he's got chops.

Dear To Be Continued,

Would you *really* never adapt *Saga* to any other medium? I understand that you made it difficult to adapt on purpose, and I am perfectly satisfied with the series as is, but sometimes, when I am lying in bed awake at night, I can't help but have the particularly naughty thought that I would love to see *Saga* adapted as a Japanese style animated series. You'd at least have a hold on the perverted side of the Star Wars demographic.

Mike Larson
Sebastian, Florida

Never say never, Mike. If the ideal collaborators came to us with a brilliant take on adapting *Saga* in some other medium, or deranged billionaires made us the ol' offer we couldn't refuse, Fiona and I might be open to collaborating and/or selling out. But our goal was only ever to make a great ongoing comic book series, and I'd be quite content if that's all Hazel's story ever remained.

(That said, please feel free to send us more homemade songs.)

Mr. Vaughan,

Your stories are beautiful, and *Saga* is no exception. When I saw the first few pages in Previews, I knew that it would be another of your wonderful tales full of interesting characters. And as most of your other books, the ending (whenever it comes) will most likely make me sob like a little baby. It helps that Ms. Staples' art is jaw dropping. The way she makes everything seem so natural and at the same time fantastic is unlike anything I've seen in any other comic book. Her illustrations are so beautiful and realistic; it's like a living watercolor.

I head up the Girls Only Comics Club at Collectors Corner in Baltimore, which gives me a chance to show other female fans comics and graphic novels that otherwise they may have

overlooked. We have been going strong for almost two years, and so far I have managed to sneak in *Pride of Baghdad*, *Ex Machina*, and most recently *Saga*. *Pride of Baghdad* was one of the biggest meetings we had, and a year later members still talk about how they want to read *Ex Machina* volume 2.

Saga was an interesting read, and the girls really liked it. They have a few questions they were hoping you'd answer.

- When Fiona Staples said that she would draw anything, did you take that as a challenge?
- Why can't Alana use her wings? And why are they almost 'jacked up' looking compared to the others of her kind. Were they injured in battle or was she born that way?
- Who's idea was it to make the Spiritual Defenders of Cleave pink, and why?
- Do you think the story would have changed if you were working with a different publisher? And do you think Image encourages you to go 'all out' with your ideas?

Thank you so much for writing such an amazing comic, I look forward each month to reading it! And if you're ever in Baltimore, we would love if you stopped by Collectors Corner so we could tell you and Fiona in person how great it is.

Andrea

Baltimore, MD

www.girlsonlycomicsclub.com

www.collectorscornermd.com

Andrea, every aspect of your letter makes me happy to be alive. Hello to the entire *Girls Only Comics Club*, and thanks for the bulleted questions. My responses, in bulleted order:

- I guess I did. I'm sure there's something that Fiona can't draw, but no one has found it yet.
- Alana was born that way, baby. Every creature from Landfall has wings, though very few of those wings are alike. And Alana's may look "jacked up," but it could have been worse. The uniforms that Fiona designed for the Landfall military all have vents that allow for wing protrusion, so if you look closely, you can see that Alana's old partner McHenry was born with tiny little penguin wings. Poor McHenry.
- God? It's not our place to ask why.
- It's less that our ideas would have been different at another publisher, and more that Image allows us to publish our ideas exactly the way we want, letting us determine everything from price point to page count to ad placement to back cover design. And Fiona and I don't just control our ideas completely, we also own them completely. Image is the best company I've ever worked with, period.

Thanks again to the G.O.C.C., and please send our best to everyone at Collectors Corner!

To Be Continued,

After writing what I believe to be the most fascinating, witty, wonderful one-lines in comic book column history...I still have not been rewarded with your throw-away junk, rare prints, and generally creepy prizes. Why? Because of one HAMBURGER K. VAUGHAN... that dog obviously has something against my gorgeous face and spellbinding charm. Please get to the bottom of this mystery, Brian. Oh yeah, I guess the book is pretty good too.

I have to be honest, though. The sea horse guy creeps me out hardcore. Marko's dad is pretty much my hero after the way I witnessed him seaming those sweet clothes. One final question... who is Alana's hairstylist? Keep up the amazing work!!! I'm pretty much in love with this book.

Daniel Bellay

Fairmont, WA

P.S. PICK ME HAMBURGER!!

Sorry, Daniel, Hamburger is just shaking his head in disgust at your naked groveling.

Hamburger K. Vaughan,

So I was wondering how deep the Prize Drawer really is. You seem to take a lot out of it each month and I've seen pictures... Wiener dogs have very short legs. As a fellow 'short-legger' I give you mad props for doing what you do.

I was wondering what it is like to be the pet of such an amazing writer. My owner is just a teacher! Do you get any special privileges like golden collars or special food?

Well it's time to use my box. I look forward to seeing what you pull out next time from the prize drawer. It's the highlight of my month.

MEOW.

Sincerely,

Prusty

the loyal cat of Mike from New Jersey

While I doubt this gesture will make Fiona and the rest of you any less upset about this month's cliffhanger, Hamburger K. Vaughan has selected Prusty the Cat as this month's lucky recipient of some bibelots from the Almighty Prize Drawer: a signed copy of this very issue, an unopened Christmas cracker, a beautiful champagne cork, the nutritional information guide from the Flaming Lips' Christmas present (great music encased inside a 7000-calorie gummy skull; you just get the crummy wrapper), and a *Midnighter* TPB featuring a strange one-shot I wrote for Darick Robertson, whose new Image miniseries *Happy!* with Grant Morrison you should absolutely be reading.

With that, it's time for gin.

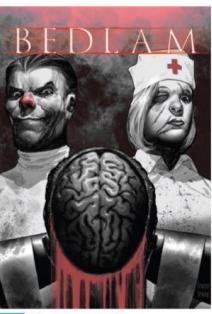
And Imzadi is the best Trek novel ever,

BKV





America's Got Powers #5 [of 6]



Bedlam #4



BlackAcre #3



Change #3 (of 4)



Chew #32



Clones #4



Comeback #4 (of 5)



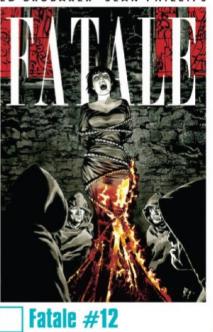
Darkness #111



Elephantmen #46



The End Times of Bram & Ben #2 (of 4)



Fatale #12



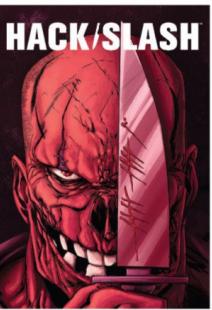
Glory #33



Great Pacific #4



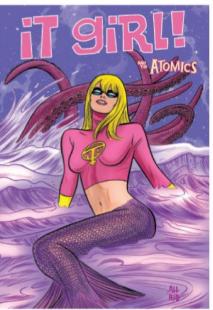
Guarding the Globe #6



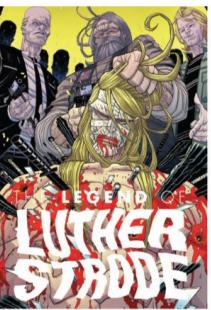
Hack/Slash #24



i Love Trouble #3



It Girl! #7



The Legend of Luther Strode #3 (of 6)



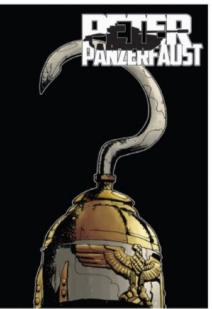
Mara #3 (of 6)



Mind the Gap #8



Morning Glories #24



Peter Panzerfaust #9



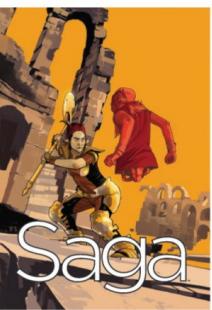
Prophet #34



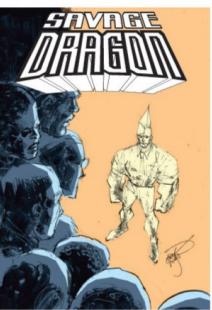
Repossessed #2 (of 4)



Revival #7



Saga #10



Savage Dragon #185



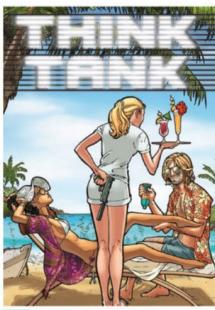
Son of Merlin #1



Spawn #228



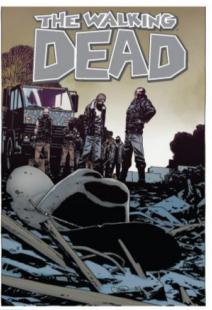
Storm Dogs #3 (of 6)



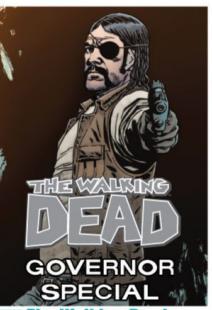
Think Tank #5



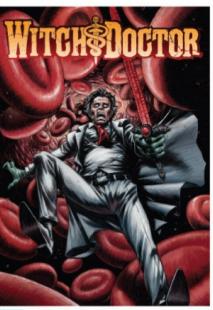
Todd, the Ugliest Kid on Earth #2 (of 4)



The Walking Dead #107



The Walking Dead Governor Special



Witch Doctor Mal Practice #4 (of 6)



Witchblade #164

Question of the Month "WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE COMIC BOOK LOVE STORY?"

"12 REASONS WHY I LOVE HER" by JAMIE S. RICH and JOELLE JONES. This is one of the books I list when people ask me what few books would I hand to people who do not read comics. Not only is the story heart-felt, but also the art content and the layout is pleasing to the eye. It reaches beyond sequential art and lightly steps into poetry."

JIMMIE ROBINSON

FIVE WEAPONS, BOMB QUEEN

"TRUE STORY, SWEAR TO GOD: CHANCES ARE..." by TOM BELAND. I was really moved and impressed with the sincerity of the storytelling and the delightful clean line artwork."

MICHEL GAGNÉ

ZED: A COSMIC TALE, SAGA OF REX

"Horatio Hellpop and Sundra Peale in NEXUS by MIKE BARON and STEVE RUDE. It's like a Norman Rockwell romance... IN SPACE!"

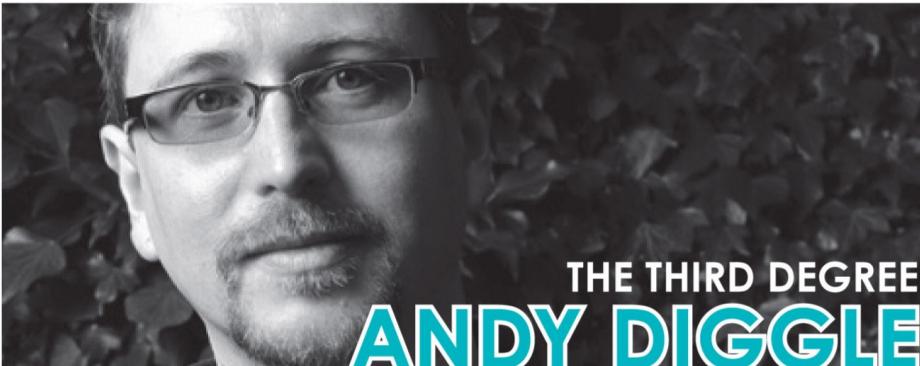
MITCH GERADS

THE ACTIVITY

FEBRUARY 2013

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THE THIRD DEGREE ANDY DIGGLE

In his decade as a professional comics writer, ANDY DIGGLE has written for DC, Marvel, and Dark Horse, as well as editing the iconic British comics anthology 2000 AD. His Vertigo graphic novel *The Losers* was adapted into a feature film in 2010. Currently, he is writing *Doctor Who* for IDW. *SNAPSHOT*, first published in serial for in *Judge Dredd Magazine*, is his first creator-owned work with longtime collaborator Jock.

What are you working on right now?
Today I'm plotting out the opening issues of my *Action Comics* run and my new Dynamite crime series.

What's the best part of your job?
Independence.

What's the worst part of your job?
Zero downtime. Lawrence Kasdan nailed it when he said, "Being a writer is like having homework every night for the rest of your life."

How did you first discover comics?
I can't remember not reading comics. I have two older brothers, so comics were always in the house. The first things I read were *The Beano*, *Asterix* and *Commando Picture Library*. Then I discovered 2000AD at age 10, and everything changed.

If you weren't working in comics, what would you be doing?
Some other kind of storytelling. Making films or writing novels, probably.

What's the best thing a fan has ever said to you?
"The comic was better."

Who is the biggest influence on your work?
John Wagner.

What is the single work of which you're most proud?
The Losers.

Own up to one of your guilty pleasures.
Cigarettes.

What was the last comic book you bought?
CBLDF Liberty Annual and the *Action Comics* Annual, this week.

If you could be someone else for a day, who would it be?

Forgive the cliché, but I'd be Neil Armstrong. To stand on the Moon and look back at the Earth, where every single person has ever lived and died? How easily we forget what an astonishing achievement that was. And how little we seem to have learned from it as a society.

What are three of the most important things in life to you?

My family, my independence, and doing what I love. Everything else is mere logistics.

What's the strangest thing you have in your house?

My kids.

What makes you laugh?

My kids.

What is one of your favorite places?
Tholt-y-Will Glen, on the Isle of Man.

What music are you listening to these days?
Whatever my wife is listening to.

What is your favorite film of all time?

Impossible to choose between *Jaws*, *Alien* or *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Who is your best friend?

I haven't murdered Jock yet.

What is the best advice you've ever received?

To switch off your inner critic while you get the first draft down. Perfectionism kills spontaneity. You fix it in the rewrite.

When was the last time you were truly frightened?

Last time I looked in the mirror.

Who is someone you really admire?

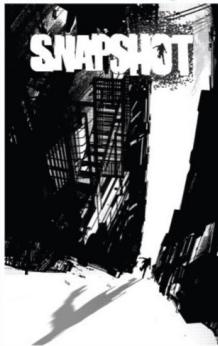
Anyone who devotes their life to the betterment of others. Nurses, teachers, child protection workers. Thankless jobs with lousy pay. They're the unsung heroes of our society.

What would you like to see happen in comics in the next 12 months?

Fewer capes, more capers.

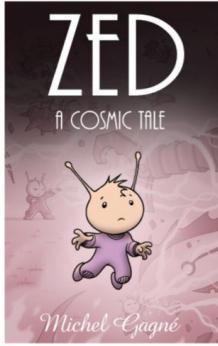
the 
EXPERIENCE CREATIVITY

SNAPSHOT #1 (OF 4)



Jake Dobson is your typical nerd: works at the Near-Mint Rhino comic-book store in San Francisco. But when he finds a lost cell phone, he's horrified to discover it's full of snapshots of a murder victim. Suddenly he finds himself hunted by a vengeful hitman who wants his phone back... and Jake in a body bag! And then things start to get "really" complicated... Don't miss the first ever creator-owned thriller from the team behind *THE LOSERS* and *GREEN ARROW: YEAR ONE*!

ZED: A COSMIC TALE



When a cute little alien named ZED demonstrates his invention to the Hierarchy of the Galaxy, something goes wrong - terribly wrong! Before long, ZED's universe is thrown into complete turmoil and our little hero must face nearly insurmountable odds trying to survive and save the very fate of his home world. Infused with a dark edge, peppered with pure silliness, and wrapped up in a childlike sense of wonder, ZED's adventures will keep readers tickled and captivated from start to finish.

FIVE WEAPONS #1 (OF 5)



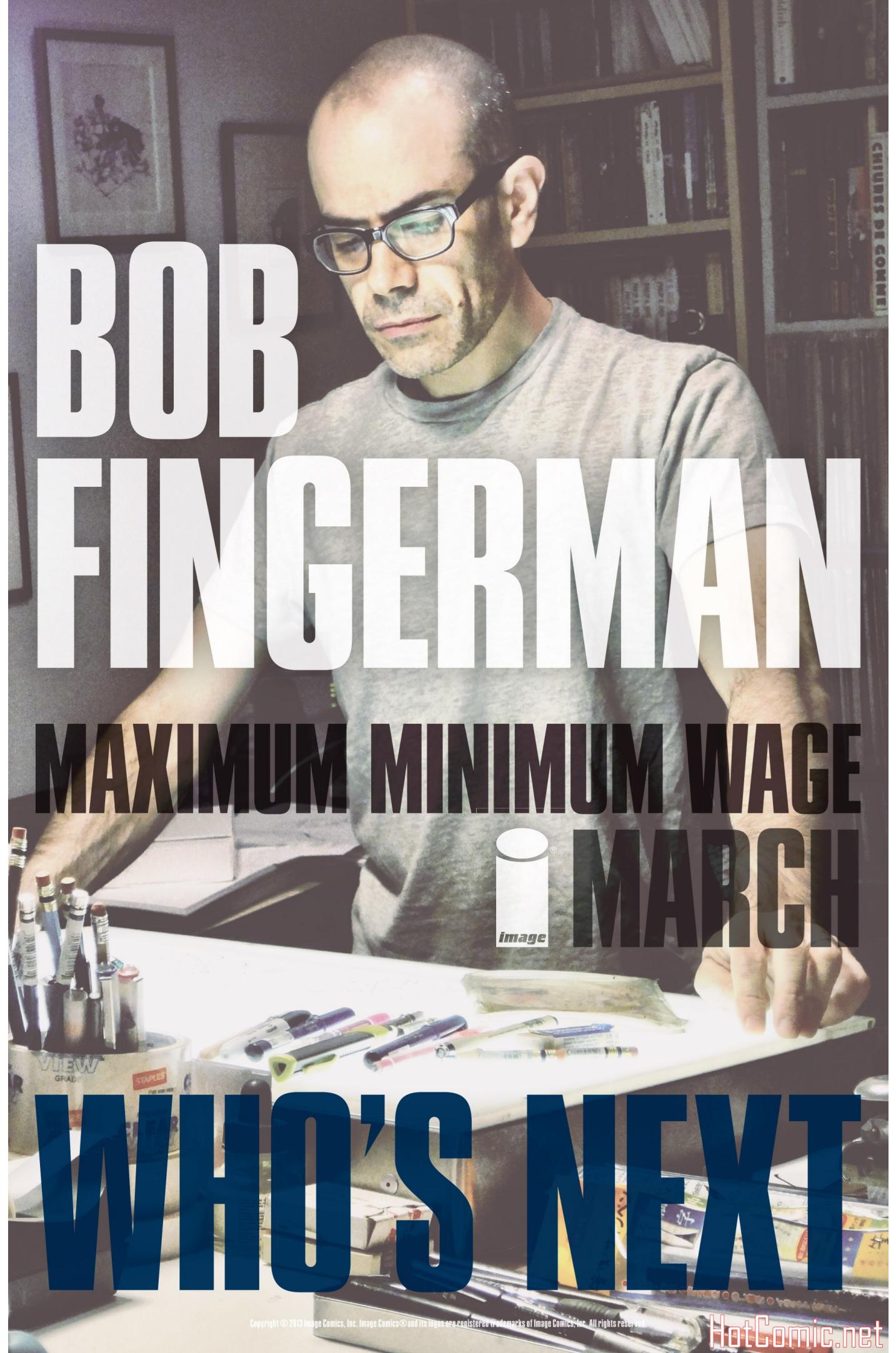
13-year-old Tyler finds himself in a specialized school where assassins send their kids for education and training in one of the five deadly weapons. Tyler doesn't have a weapon or any fighting skills, but he still plans to graduate by beating every weapon master in the school because he has a powerful ability that nobody can match: his razor-sharp mind! JIMMIE ROBINSON twists the insanity of BOMB QUEEN in a fun new series that will keep you guessing to the end.

UNCANNY SKULLKICKERS #1



THE UNCANNY SKULLKICKERS: Two hard-headed mercenaries kill monsters and cause havoc in their search for money, fame and adventure! A bold new direction! A perfect jumping-on point! A newly added adjective! Our nineteenth issue, but also a new issue *Ne*! It's all here, people! Don't make us use more exclamation marks!!

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BOB FINGERMAN

MAXIMUM MINIMUM WAGE MARCH



WHO'S NEXT

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